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THE BELIEVER'S ASSURANCE.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN BENNINGTON, NEW-HAMPSHIRE,

May 9, 1846,

AT THE FUNERAL OF

MRS. MARY ADALINE CHICK,

WIFE OF

REV. JOHN M. CHICK.

BY

EBENEZER E. CUMMINGS,

PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, CONCORD.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

Concord:

PRESS OF ASA McFARLAND: MAIN STREET.

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II. COR. 5 : 1.

FOR WE KNOW, THAT IF OUR EARTHLY HOUSE OF THIS TABERNACLE WERE DISSOLVED, WE HAVE A BUILDING OF GOD, AN HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS.

THE fear of death originated in man's apostacy from God. Men fear to die, because they are sinners. It is deep-seated in the natural heart, and no efforts of reason or philosophy can expel it. Nature instinctively shrinks from the cold slumbers of the grave; for, unaided by revelation, all its conjectures have never relieved its gloom by one clear and steady beam of light. But the Word of God illuminates the dark valley of the shadow of death. Faith in the truths therein revealed, imparts to us the assurance that death shall be swallowed up in victory.

And not only so, but the anticipation of this victory over death cheers and supports the believer in the midst of the trials and afflictions through which he is called to pass in this world. This is most impressively illustrated in the chapter which precedes the one containing the text. The apostle, after a graphic description of the trials through which he had been called to pass in the prosecution of his work, in which he enumerates troubles, perplexities, persecutions, depression, and even deliverance unto death—declares that he was sustained through all this catalogue of woes by faith in the resurrection of the dead, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and present us with you." He, moreover, draws the conclusion, that the trials which go to make up the afflictions of this life, so far from being a damage to us, are the very instruments by which the soul is fitted for a richer reward in heaven. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

The words which are selected as the theme of the present discourse, are a continuation of the argument contained in the preceding chapter, and embrace the grounds of the believer's courage and patience under affliction, and the assurance with which his soul is fortified in prospect of death. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The words of the text imply that we must all die. Indeed, no truth can be made more self-evident than that death is the end of all the living. The volume of revelation, our daily observation, and an abiding consciousness, each in turn establishes and confirms the truth, that this body must lie down in the dust and become food for worms. It is an event which we all expect; and though we endeavor, by a thousand arts, to ward off the stroke, yet we know its approach is inevitable. We can scarcely look upon this world without gazing upon the ravages of death. "There is no man that has power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war." Such is the painful destiny of man; and, could we look no further, we might sit down in despair, and leave death to do its worst, without an opposing effort. Life would not be worth preserving.

But there is a bright side to this dark picture. The gospel sheds a flood of light and glory upon the darkness of the tomb, and bears us away from this scene of suffering and death, to a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. This gives us a joyful triumph over death. Let it approach, armed with all its terrors;—it is but the taking down of this frail tabernacle, that the soul may take possession of the mansion which is prepared for him in heaven. Of this he has the assurance:—"We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

We learn from this portion of Scripture, that the assurance of a heavenly inheritance disarms death of its terrors. This truth will appear if we consider,

I. The foundation on which this assurance is based. Our Lord Jesus Christ has "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light." Death is the wages of sin. Man falls beneath its power, because he is a sinner. The sentence of death has been passed upon all men. But Christ stooped from his throne of glory, and assumed our nature for the purpose of removing this curse. He was made "partaker of flesh and blood, that through death he might

destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

The leading object of Christ's advent into this world was to make atonement for sin. In effecting this, he obeyed the precepts of God's law, and suffered its penalty; and, having thus obeyed and suffered in our place and for us, God can now maintain the rectitude of his authority, as the moral governor of the universe, and extend pardon to the repenting sinner. The sufferings and death of Christ lay a sure foundation for the pardon of sin. "And as the sting of death is sin, so the pardon of sin disarms death of its power, and gives us favor in the presence of a reconciled God." Our guilt, as unpardoned sinners, shuts us out from communion with God; but pardon restores his favor, and gives us joyful access to his presence.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has also laid the foundation for the believer's justification before God. Christ "was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The apostle, in describing the work of Christ in laying the foundation for the believer's pardon and justification, says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sin, that are past through the forbearance of God to declare I say at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The righteousness of Christ, wrought out by his obedience unto death, furnishes the only ground of justification before God. This also gives to the believer a foundation of justification which is firm and enduring—a righteousness that God has owned, and by virtue of which he will treat the believer as though he had never sinned.

Christ has also laid the foundation for the believer's sanctification. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water, by the Word, that he might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." Such is the foundation on which the hope of the believer is based. Through the death of Christ, he is pardoned, justified, and made holy, and is thus enabled to triumph over the power and influence of death.

But our view of this subject will be too limited, unless we con-

sider, in this connection, the resurrection of Christ from the dead. His sufferings and death paid the ransom for man's redemption, but his resurrection from the dead gave him victory over the great enemy. This is the crowning act in the work of redemption. "For," says the apostle, "if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life," that is, by his resurrection from the dead.

Having suffered upon the ignominious tree, our great Redeemer gave up the ghost and entered the dark dominion of death. There he fought single-handed with the cruel monster and conquered; and, leading death a captive, he burst the bars of his prison-house, took possession of the keys of death and the grave, and ascended to heaven. The rays of immortal glory that encircled his conquering brow, still illuminate the dark valley of the shadow of death; while he, upon the throne of power and dominion, proclaims himself to be "the resurrection and the life." He assures his people that death is conquered; that a way is opened through its dreary dominion to the bright regions of eternal day. Nay, more, that the body is redeemed from the bondage of corruption, and that it shall come forth from its bed of dust, invested with all the elements of immortality, when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. Of this he has given a pledge in his own resurrection from the dead. He arose as "the first fruits of them that slept," and being "the head of the body, the church," the connection is not more certain between the vine and the branches, or the head and the members, than between his resurrection and all his followers. He has not left us to deduce this from the dark imaginings of reason, or to collect it from the scattered intimations in the word of God. We have something more even than a direct promise. It is established upon the most glorious fact of Christianity—the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He holds the ashes of all the saints under his special care; his eye is on their sleeping dust, and he will bring it forth "at the resurrection of the just," "fashioned like unto his glorious body."

Then, it may be further remarked, that the dominion and intercession of Christ furnishes the living testimony, that he will carry out and consummate the work, the foundation of which he laid in his own sufferings and death. He is now engaged in "bringing many sons unto glory," and he will not fail nor be discouraged until the great work is completed. How impressive and triumphant is the language of the apostle, in reference to this truth: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who

is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Well, then, may the believer triumph over the afflictions of earth, and over death itself, in view of "the glory that shall be revealed in us." Jesus has lighted up that dreary way, and constituted it the highway to immortal bliss.

II. There is such an energy given to the believer's evidence as to raise him above fear. The glory appears so bright to the eye of faith, that it annihilates the darkness of the tomb; and the joys of the inheritance of the saints are so intently anticipated, that the pains of death are forgotten.

The Scriptures make mention of an earnest of these joys, which is imparted to the believer. "Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." This earnest, or foretaste, of the heavenly joys, imparts a degree of moral certainty that in due time it will be bestowed upon us. And this earnest of joys to come enables the believer to look across the dark valley of the shadow of death, to those realms of glory to which he holds in his heart this title of assurance. Death's darkness is lost in heaven's effulgence, and death's bitterness is swallowed up in the sweetness of resting in the arms of Jesus.

The Scriptures furnish some very impressive illustrations of this earnest of the heavenly inheritance, and its power to disarm death of its terrors. Listen to the language of the venerable patriarch of Luz, when, rifled of his property, bereft of his children, and his body covered with hateful sores, he sat down to bemoan his wretched condition. "I know," says he, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and not another."

The Psalmist could turn the eye of faith from the darkness and toil of this world, to the bright visions of the Lamb, and exclaim, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

It is worthy of particular remark, that the apostle, in bringing into notice the power and operation of faith in ancient saints, does not omit this important element—this earnest of a heavenly inheritance, which made them forget the darkness and pains of death. Their conduct plainly showed "that they sought a better country, even an

heavenly." To this they directed their faith; and, in the midst of the cruel tortures inflicted upon them by their enemies, they would not "accept deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."

But, perhaps, in no instance is the truth now under consideration more impressively illustrated than in the experience of the apostle Paul. In his letters to the churches, he frequently alludes to this exercise. "I know," says he, "in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day." How touching, too, is his language on this subject in the immediate prospect of dissolution. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." Would time permit, we might still pursue this interesting train of illustration, through the lives of martyrs, and confessors, and more modern saints, in whose exercises we may clearly trace the operations of the Spirit, as it has shed the glory of heaven into the soul, and given his people a foretaste of its joys, to allure them to its ineffable fruition. But enough has already been presented, to show us that such a foretaste of heaven takes away the sting of death and disarms it of its terrors.

III. The enrapturing views which are given in revelation of the heavenly world, are calculated to overcome the terror or dread of death. Faith often enables the believer to gain very clear views of that world of glory. With holy ecstasy he looks forward to "that city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God." In that glorious abode there is no night; the inhabitants need not the sun nor the light of the moon; for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light of it. There is no sin, no pain, no suffering, no death. The saint shall triumph over all that afflicts and disturbs his happiness in this world;—shall see the last enemy slain, and shall reign as a king and priest unto God forever!

The believer is assured that Jesus has gone to the home of redeemed spirits, and is waiting for him to come. There he will be permitted to see him without a glass between. There the soul will commune with the spirits of just men made perfect, and with them admire the mysteries of redeeming love! O, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven! Who would

not exchange earth for such a privilege as this? Who would fear death, with this in prospect? When the believer gains a view, by faith, of this blessedness, earth's attractions are not sufficiently strong, nor are death's terrors sufficiently alarming, to hold him back. He longs to depart and to be with Christ.

How often have we seen this truth demonstrated as we have stood by the bedside of the dying saint. While he has fixed his heart upon the glory of that bright world, and surveyed, by faith, what God has prepared for him in heaven, with what rapture could he exclaim, "The bitterness of death is past." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

How glorious is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It furnishes a perfect antidote for the fear of death. It does not exempt us from death, but gives the believer power to triumph in it and over it. Our Redeemer has himself been down into the dark dominions of death, encountered the monster and taken away his sting, and all that are in Christ by faith shall share in the benefits of that victory. We must all pass through the dark valley; it is the only passage from this world to heaven; but, even then, you may walk in the light of the divine countenance, and be charmed with the music of attending angels. The grave may appear cold and dark, but as sure as Jesus rose from the dead, the body will burst the fetters of the grave and come forth in purity and splendor, at the resurrection of the just. Death, then, is turned into a blessing. To die is to go by the high road to victory and glory, in the steps of the great Captain of our salvation.

The subject to which your attention has now been directed, has a most impressive illustration in the life and death of her on whose account we are to-day called together.

Mrs. MARY ADALINE CHICK was born in Westmoreland, N. H., February 23, 1815. Her father, REV. JOHN SPALDING, now resides in Franklin, Vermont.

She was the subject of religious impression at the age of five years, from which time she always maintained secret prayer. Afterwards, however, she became very fond of youthful amusements, and for a number of years maintained a struggle between the deep convictions of conscience and the desires of a sinful heart; often feeling an ardent wish that it was consistent with religion to engage in the pleasures of this world. But notwithstanding her strong attachment to the amusements of earth, she continued, without interruption, the habit of prayer; never living one day without it, and often praying earnestly for particular blessings.

It was not, however, until her seventeenth year that she gave her heart to God and was buried with Christ in baptism. The following extract from a few pages written expressly for her children, will give an impressive view of her feelings at this time :

“ The summer I was sixteen I taught my first school. My health being poor, and having been so for some months, I had been more serious, and much oftener went through with my ceremony of prayer. As near as I can recollect, my requests were that my health might be restored ; that I might be prepared for death when it did come, and not be taken away in my sins. I asked for forgiveness, yet I have no recollection of seeking repentance. At this time, I thought myself very good, *almost* a Christian. There was a very pleasant grove near my boarding place, and I passed much of my leisure time in this place, in reading, reflection and prayer, and fancied I enjoyed such seasons. I sought opportunities of being alone, that I might reflect and read. Memoirs of pious persons were my delight. After teaching two months, I was sent for to go home, as my father was very sick, and it was feared at the point of death. My feelings cannot be described. While riding home, most earnestly did I pray that he might be spared, for of my father I was extremely fond. Many times did I ask myself, Am I willing to promise to seek the Lord with my whole heart, and seek till I find him, if he will but restore my father ? To promise to seek conversion, I never had been willing to do, for two reasons : I did not want religion so young, and I had always thought I would never set a time for seeking religion lest I should pass it over, as others had done. On reaching home I found my father much lower than I had expected ; no hope of his recovery ; able just to notice me for a minute, but could not talk. Once again, and yet again, did I retire to a secluded spot in the garden, to pray that he might live. He seemed, however, during all the afternoon to grow weaker and weaker. I now became willing, and in prayer solemnly promised that if the Lord would spare him, I would seek religion from that time till my death, if I did not find it sooner. Before sunset the fever turned, and father began to mend. My promise was fixed and I was glad to seek the Lord, and repeatedly did I ask for strength to keep my resolution. I felt willing to give up my associates and be a Christian, only I wished no one to know it until my conversion, and then I would do as I felt about telling of it. Perfectly blind to the sin of my heart, which was so proud that for no price could I be persuaded to let any one know I was praying to become a Christian—my father, above all others, should I be unwilling to have know it. This was about the first of August. I continued to pray with more earnestness and frequency till September, sometimes wondering the Lord did not hear and convert me, since I was willing and even wishing to be a Christian. It had often been said to me, if there was only a willingness to come to Christ, he stood ready to receive me. I thought myself so well versed in the things of religion, that I could tell any one just how to obtain it, and could myself seek it at any time, without the least instruction ; because I had heard the way pointed out so much and

had read the experience of so many. The carnal heart cannot discern spiritual things. I often feared father saw something of my feelings, and sought much to conceal them. An intimate friend was visiting me about this time, and though neither she nor her friends made pretensions to piety, I ventured, while alone with her, to introduce the subject of religion. I did not mean to let her know my feelings, but I found her quite thoughtful. I spoke of the necessity of our becoming pious. She fell in with what I said. We passed most of the afternoon in religious conversation. There was to be a protracted meeting in a neighboring town in a few days. She promised to attend with me, and between this time and that to pray that at the meeting we might obtain the pearl of great price. I felt almost sure of finding it there, because the Lord would not reject the numerous prayers I made in reference to it. So much the sinner supposes he can do something to lay God under obligation.

“I heard no more from this lady, but when the time came for the meeting it was agreed that others of the family should attend the first two days, and I the last two. This suited me, as I thought there I should have opportunity for prayer before going. I went to the meeting with almost full confidence that I should return with sins forgiven. My parents were praying for this, and I had much faith in their prayers. How just that my self-righteousness should be disappointed. I returned as I went, with no hope. Some persons at the meeting, who were perfectly indifferent at first, went home rejoicing in the Lord. I went to the meeting fully determined not to let any person know my feelings, but when request was made for such as wished the prayers of Christians to take a different seat, I was brought to a test. I had never heard such a request before, and thought I needed their prayers as much as any; but could not go, for then all would see me, and father, too, which I thought would be worse than all. I had occasion, however, to move my seat, and in doing so passed a very profane man of my acquaintance, all in tears going to the seat. I said, If he is going I will go, and passed directly to the seats. I soon found my sister was at my side. My feelings were peculiar. It was some gratification that so large a company had taken the seats, (fifty or more,) for the meeting was very full. But everybody now knew I chose religion. I tried to join heartily in the prayer offered, but the thought that so many saw me kneeling would sometimes take my attention. Sister was apparently under the strongest conviction. This I sought long, but did not feel it. I knew it was necessary, but did not know how to get it. I was for a time much ashamed of the step I had taken; shunned all acquaintances. It seemed almost impossible to meet father. Mother I dreaded to see, but not so much. I met her before evening. She was in tears; said a few words to me, but I hastened away after answering her. I do not know as it occurred to me that this was pride of heart, but I knew it was not just right for me to be unwilling to have it known. At evening, father met me, and a blow from his hand, as much as I loved him, would not so much be

dreaded as his words. I answered him, and was soon away. I felt it was wrong, but my wicked heart was unwilling to gratify him to listen to any exhortation that I saw he could scarcely suppress. That evening, by the special request of a friend in a prayer meeting, I went forward again for prayers. I had now some more feeling—was willing to converse with Christians, but chose to do it privately. I sought out some converts of my acquaintance, and asked them how they found the Saviour. They would tell me; but the carnal heart cannot see so as of itself to seek and find mercy. The next morning, for the sake of avoiding father, and for reflection, I took a walk. In a few minutes father met me. He extended his hand, and I could do nothing less than hear what he had to say. His heart seemed almost ready to burst with anxiety, but I could not possibly have told him my feelings.

“I was always glad to hear of the conviction or conversion of any one; but was so much interested for myself, I did not pray as formerly for such. I attended all religious meetings, as far as convenient; prayed most of the time mentally, while laboring with my hands, or walking; always requested prayers when opportunity was given; and very frequently spoke in the meetings of my feelings. There seemed to be a great interest manifested for me, and I frequently asked Christians to pray for particular sins, such as that I might see my guilt. I feared, and rightly, too, that I knew very little of my wicked heart. I knew I had committed no gross sins—been addicted to no vices such as children who had not pious parents;—on the contrary, I had from a child always reproved those who indulged in such sins, and to this day an oath or a lie will give a chill. I told them at these meetings I was willing to do anything the Lord required of me, to become a Christian. At length one evening, the first of November, I was at a prayer-meeting, and as usual spoke of my feelings and anxiety of mind. The revival had been very great; it seemed to me as if all were coming to Christ, and all successful except me; yet I never recollect of feeling to murmur about this. After speaking, the minister (he was a Methodist, and one who had been an acquaintance and friend of ours for several years, and had a particular interest in my conversion after I first requested prayers,) says, ‘Mary, if you will kneel and pray for yourself, we will all pray for you, and it seems as if we shall prevail.’ This was more than I had ever thought of doing. All sat waiting, but I could not comply. Finally they rose and knelt, I with them, thinking some one was going to pray. None began. At length the minister said, ‘Mary, pray.’ I did so, but I know not what I said, except to plead for mercy. I closed and they rose. I felt a relief, but had not thought this was religion. From this time I had less anxiety about myself—was more ready to converse with father, though always talked with him with less freedom than others. He seemed to encourage me in every way. He wished me to hope, but it seemed like presumption, for I had none of that joy so many others spoke of. Though I knew every one had not joy, yet it appeared as if they had something by

which they might feel pretty certain they were Christians—at least I wished it. Then I remembered I had often said, let the Lord deliver me in any way, I would be contented.

“The remainder of the month I doubted and hoped—was very anxious for the unconverted and prayed for them, and was happy in doing so, though I myself should be cast away. About this time some very stubborn sinners were brought out. It was my delight day and night to pray for them. By degrees my doubts were removed, so that on the 6th of September I was strengthened to follow the steps of my Redeemer in baptism and unite with the visible church.”

In the spring of 1836 she entered the female seminary at New-Hampton, where she pursued her studies most ardently, and taught during vacation in different places, until she completed her course of studies, August, 1839. Immediately afterward, she was engaged as one of the teachers of that institution, where she continued until just before her marriage. During her connection with the seminary, both as pupil and teacher, she won the affection and confidence of all with whom she was acquainted, by her lovely deportment and superior endowments as a pupil and instructor; while at the same time the religious influence under which she was placed had the most happy effect in giving a deeper tone to her piety, and leading her to a more entire consecration to God.

In 1841, February 11, she was united in marriage with him who now deeply mourns her early exit, and moved to Warner, N. H., and assumed the arduous duties of a pastor's wife. Teaching being her great delight, and several persons earnestly desiring her instruction, she cheerfully and skillfully divided her time between her family, the church, and the work of teaching a few terms of select school. In the mean time, she was permitted to witness a most powerful and extensive revival, in which she engaged with all her powers of body and mind. In November, 1844, several successive colds so far reduced her strength as to lead to the apprehension that she would go into a decline, though every means was tried to restore health. “This sickness,” she says, “led me to examine the hope I had indulged in Christ, and my willingness to die.” After struggling most anxiously for a long time with doubts and fears, she was delivered from this state of great darkness, and permitted to enjoy a firm and happy confidence of her union with Christ. She thus speaks of the joyful change in her feelings:

“It became necessary for me to examine my hope of a happy immortality. I endeavored to do so most critically; but my mind was all darkness, despair, and I could find no act in all my life that could give me the least claim upon the mercies of God. All I had done I saw to have been connected with sin. For a moment I felt myself to be inevitably lost, when suddenly it occurred to me, with more force than ever before, ‘By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.’ I had nothing to do but consent to be a sinner saved by grace. At this hour Christ appeared unto me all, and I thought if ever permitted again to teach,

my theme should be the blessed Saviour. In the providence of God, however, I did so far recover from this attack that friends flattered themselves I might regain my health, though I saw my disease was fixed. In December, 1845, I chose to come to Bennington, N. H., where my husband might enjoy a more favorable opportunity to labor for the salvation of precious souls. I expected to waste and die among strangers, but I found my new residence a land of friends, kind, *very kind* to the last; all seemed ready to do me every favor in their power. In a few weeks my health again declined rapidly, but my confidence and trust in Christ increased as my physical strength diminished. Yet the desired object which made me more than ever willing to leave my parents and dear relations, I was permitted to live to see accomplished; for in a short time the Lord converted and added to his church a number of precious souls, which very much soothed and consoled me in my last days."

While she was able to hold her pen, it was employed in writing religious letters to relations and friends, and especially to those unconverted. Irreligious persons visiting her during her last days were earnestly entreated to seek God immediately. When Christian friends left her whom she did not expect to see again in this world, she usually said, "Soon we shall meet in heaven." For months before her departure she conversed with perfect calmness of her death, and arranged all her family affairs, intending to leave her house set in order. In the appendix may be seen the letter written for her children, for each of whom a Bible was purchased, labeled and presented by herself. Hearing that Mrs. Jones and Miss S. P. Richardson (her affectionate room and classmates at New-Hampton) were dead, she exclaimed, with much feeling, "Have they gone before me? I shall soon see them and be with them in heaven." At one time, waking suddenly and opening her eyes upon a rose, (the flower she loved above all others,) placed before her in the room while asleep, she said, "Husband, I thought I was in heaven. Ah! no, I am not—no roses in heaven, but there is that which is more lovely and beautiful—the Saviour." When thought to be dying, her prayer for her children was as follows: "O Lord, give me faith to pray for my dear motherless sons. Make them thine. Make them useful in the world, and take them to heaven at last." A very kind friend offering to take the care of her eldest boy gratuitously until her death, she remarked, with affecting gratitude, "Does God intend to be always thus so very good, and provide for my orphan children? Then may I die feeling confident they will never suffer." From that hour she seemed fully to give them up. The Sabbath previous to her death, by her request, she received the sacrament in her sick room. At the close of the service she spoke as follows: "My dear friends, I shall drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. I am for the last time commemorating the sufferings and death of my Saviour. I can say but little, but I want to meet all this little company in heaven. I have been with you only a short time, but long enough to love you. You have been very kind to me. Heaven must reward

you—I cannot. I want you all to be faithful unto death, and hope we shall all meet again where there is no sin. Pray for me.” The last two verses of the “Union Hymn” were then sung, the last of which she was able to sing, and she sung it nearly alone, all others being too deeply affected to do anything but weep. When the friends had left the room, she said, “How much I have enjoyed this communion.”

When the hour of death came, May 7, 1846, she was more than willing to die, and exclaimed, “O Lord, do now let me depart and be with Christ, which is far better. My trust in God is firm and strong. Husband, preach Christ as long as you live. Warn sinners to flee to Christ. Tell all Christians to be faithful unto death.” A dear friend remarked in her hearing that she might die about sunset. She said, with a happy expression, “Blessed hour.” Nearly the last words she uttered on earth were, “My dear, *precious, precious, most precious* Saviour, save me by thy grace;” and she calmly fell asleep in Jesus.

In the character of this dear departed saint there is much to be admired, and much that we should feel called upon to imitate. The law of Christian kindness was on her lips and in her spirit, of which her husband and her children, the servants of Christ, and the whole church of God, were permitted to share. Those best acquainted best knew that in active, sympathetic kindness, she was surpassed by very few. Naturally ardent and active, she turned this feature of mind into the single channel of doing good. She lived for others. Her supreme desire and ambition while on earth seemed to be one: to be *useful*. In efforts to elevate others, intellectually and spiritually, she found life and joy. She never seemed happier than when, forgetting herself, she was engaged in turning others to Christ. In her last days she desired the prayers of Christians, but said, “I dare not ask them to pray for me often, lest it should prevent them from praying so much for the impenitent.” It was her great pleasure to see religion flourish, and souls brought into the kingdom of God. While connected with the seminary at New-Hampton, she took a very lively part in the precious revivals which were enjoyed; and the most cheering point in her labors with the people of her husband’s charge in Warner was an interesting revival of religion, in which the church nearly doubled its members by the accession of joyful converts. And even here, in the midst of strangers, the ardently desired object which made her more than willing to leave all her relations and sunder every tie, was to see precious souls converted and added to the church. At no time, however, throughout life, did her piety display itself in a profusion of religious discourse about her own joy or sorrow; but her religion very much appeared in its fruits in a steady, conscientious performance of every-day duty, as an affectionate wife, and an intelligent, devoted, praying mother.

But she has left this scene of suffering, pain and death, and now beholds him whom her soul loved, without a glass between. She has

gone to join that host who stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and praise him day and night in his temple.

That body has wasted away by the hand of disease until death has done its work; and now it is destined to decay; it must return to dust—but all that dust will come up from the grave in the bright morning of the resurrection. And that spirit rests with Jesus. It looks back and beckons us away. And soon we shall join her upon the bright plains of immortal glory; and O, what scenes shall we pass in that world of light!

But we are filled with grief when we return to earth and feel that she is not here, where everything sighs the plaintive note, "O, where is she?" She will no more soothe the throbbing and even broken heart of her bereaved husband—no more with maternal tenderness bend over their motherless boys. No more will the house of prayer witness her devotions, nor the church her ardent attachment to its interests. No more will that placid smile welcome the minister of Christ to the cheerful hearth and refreshing board; and no more will the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, be cheered by her welcome tread and the accents of sympathy that were wont to fall upon their ear. She has left this sphere of action and entered upon the reward of her works of love and goodness. Let us be followers of her who through faith and patience now inherests the promises.

Separations are daily taking place in this world, but if we are in Christ we shall all meet again, and meet no more to separate. Surely, then, the believer has reason to contemplate death with feelings of delight. He has reason to sing the song of triumph while he has breath; and he will see infinitely greater cause to swell the anthem of praise and victory, when he shall stand before the throne of God and the Lamb. O, what a song of triumph will that be, when all the redeemed present themselves before the throne and raise their voices, like the sound of many waters, unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

LETTER FROM Mrs. CHICK TO HER CHILDREN.

MY VERY DEAR CHILDREN: Your mother who has nursed you, watched over, cared for and loved you as none other can love, is about to be taken from you to the spirit world. You are so young now as not to be able to retain much that I might say to you, and I take a little of my remaining strength to write what I might wish to say.

I wish you both to endeavor to be kind to, and love each other—avoid all occasion for little disputes or hardness—strive each to be *first* to forgive. Study to please those who have the care of you; and as you will see others occasionally pettish and fretful, be careful not to indulge in it yourselves. Bear little disappointments patiently. Decide with caution what is *right*, and always do it. Do not think that because *others* are not exact, in little matters of right and wrong, *you* need not be. Never consider it mean or degrading to do different from your company, when they do wrong, no matter what they say; it is *honorable*, and I trust you will feel it so. Many young men have been utterly ruined, because they had not courage to be called singular. Do not join where any one is run upon or slandered; rather take the part of the injured. Let this be a governing rule, *do to others as you wish others to do by you*. You cannot too often test yourselves by *this rule*. I wish it written on your memories and hearts. Do not retaliate when injured; “revenge dwells in little minds.”

Aim always to be engaged in something useful—idleness brings mischief and injures the mind. Never have any waste moments to pass in listening to idle gossip, at bar-rooms or elsewhere. Let such spare time be given to some intellectual pursuit. You must never be ashamed to expose your ignorance, when, by doing so, you can increase your information. Do not indulge yourselves in loose, profane or immoral company. Have but few intimates, and those of the choicest principles and habits. Of course you would not be hasty in selecting associates. When you go among strangers, you are in the most danger of being deceived, for the respectable will not seek your acquaintance till they see *you* are *respectable*, and the vicious or criminal will be ready to extend the hand of kindness immediately. You may take the prudence of the former for coldness or indifference, and the conduct of the latter for benevolence. Avoid all little, tricky things, that by some are called bright and witty; they lower you in the opinion of people of good sense. Be kind and obliging to all—find your own happiness in making others happy. Try and make the world better for your living in it. Never seek for preëminence in any thing but *being good*. Study every amiable quality, and seek to possess it. See what are the virtues that please in others, and try to acquire them. Remember to respect, love and obey your father. He has done much for your comfort, and will ever be an interested friend. You will find this a very tempting world; you need to guard on every side, or you will be drawn into some wrong path, imperceptibly.

What I have said is all very common place; but very essential to your respectability, usefulness and happiness. Attend to these *little things carefully*, and you cannot fail to be esteemed.

But there is *one thing of far more importance* than all I have said. It is that you *early* commence to love and serve God. You may be moral, amiable, benevolent, kind, and, in fact, possess *every* trait the world calls virtuous, and not have any true love and submission to God; and without this, you are *not christians*. Religion consists in no *external good*. It is simply repentance for sin and faith in Christ, as the *only* Saviour from sin. It is and *shall be* your mother's earnest prayer that in early life, before your hearts become hardened in crime, you learn, by sweet experience, what this submission is, and so in youth commence to lay up a treasure in heaven.

I leave you each, as my last gift, a Bible; may you often read it, and love to do so. It is my wish that *once*, at least, you would read them through by course. May you make the Bible a *book of study*. The more you do this, the more interesting it will become to you. Of course, you will ever be members of a Sabbath School, and try to induce others to join you. But I must leave these few broken sentences, as my last advice to those dear sons that were lent to my care for only a few short years. “I commend you to God and the word of his grace.” In all your trials, look to him for support. He can do more for you than the most tender earthly friend. May your lives be devoted to his service, and you be prepared at death to go and dwell with the Saviour, and join your dear mother in the song, *Saved by Grace, Saved by Grace!*

By your most affectionate mother,

Franklin, Nov. 14, 1845.

MARY A. CHICK.

